

**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

Improved compounds and base precursors that undergo thermal decomposition are disclosed. Thermal base precursors, and in particular, a novel class of salts of arylsulfonylacetic acids as bleaching agents or promoting for 5 photothermographic use are disclosed. Compositions employing these thermal base precursors are suitable for use in acutance and antihalation systems, bleachable filter dye materials, and in promoting unblocking of various components such as blocked developers, especially in photothermographic elements.